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Unveiling the Colonial Impact While Forming an Independent Education System in Pakistan

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Abstract

The current study will dive into the impact of British ideology regarding education during its rule over the subcontinent, its effect on the current Pakistani curriculum; and how it has caused challenges in forming an independent Educational system particularly in the region of Pakistan (post-independence). The essay will be divided into three main sections. The first section deals with a brief over-view of the post-colonial period and the prevailing education system in Pakistan. The second section will highlight the problem that why the Pakistani Education System is still rooted in British Curriculum. The last section will look at the possible solutions to rectify the damage followed by concluding remarks. In the first section, we will see the educational curriculum of Pakistan through critical lens of post-colonial theory.[1] Whereby, the second sections will take into account an Orientalist and decolonial approach by upholding the stance of Edward Said[2] in particular. The last section will be an endeavor to develop my view point for forming an independent educational curriculum in Pakistan. In addition, this section will also explore future prospects and suggestions in formulating a separate educational system.

Keywords: Colonialism, decolonization, Eurocentric-curriculum, orientalism, Occidentalism, Pakistan Education, System

Introduction

It's not a hidden fact that colonization has imbibed people's mind-set even during the post-colonial period. Eurocentrism has left an imprint in every sphere of formerly colonized countries be its politics, economy, culture, military administration or education.[3] The superficial superiority of

[1]Post-colonial theories can be applied as a strategic critique to innumerable contemporary academic disciplines [. Burney, "Edward Said and Postcolonial Theory: Disjunctured Identities and the Subaltern Voice," in *Pedagogy of the Other: Edward Said, Postcolonial Theory, and Strategies for Critique*. Counterpoints: Studies in the Postmodern Theory of Education, (Vol. 417) (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 41-60].

[2]Edward Wadie Said is a Palestinian-American social writer, activist and postcolonial intellectualist famous for his It's not a hidden fact that colonization has imbibed people's mind-set even during the post-colonial period. Eurocentrism has left an imprint in every sphere of formerly colonized countries be its work *Orientalism.*

[3]D. Hopwood, "Albert Hourani: Islam, Christianity and Orientalism," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 30 (2), (2003): 127–136. https://doi.org/10.1080/1353019032000126491.

Western culture is so deeply ingrained in formerly colonized countries that they still suppress their own history and culture in favor of Western civilization.[4]

Given this inferiority complex, it is rather difficult and challenging for any country in the post-colonial era to eradicate existing beliefs and create self-identity on the basis of their own history, religion and culture.[5] In similar vein, British rule in the sub-continent for over two centuries left its mark on every domain especially in the field of education.

This essay will study the impact of British ideology regarding education during its rule over the subcontinent, its effect on the current Pakistani curriculum; and how it has caused challenges in forming an independent Educational system particularly in the region of Pakistan (post-independence). The essay will be divided into three main sections. The first section deals with a brief over-view of the post-colonial period and the prevailing education system in Pakistan. The second section will highlight the problem section will look at the possible solutions to rectify the damage followed by concluding remarks. In the first section, we will see the educational curriculum of Pakistan through critical lens of post-colonial theory.[6] Whereby, the second sections will take into account an Orientalist and decolonial approach by upholding the stance of Edward Said[7] in particular.[8] The last section will be an endeavor to develop my view point for forming an independent educational curriculum in Pakistan. In addition, this section will also explore future prospects and suggestions in formulating a separate educational system.

Moreover, the essay aims to study following questions: 1) Why is the Pakistani Education System is unable to erase British curriculum over the past seven decades? 2) How Pakistan can benefit from an independent curriculum? 3) What are the factors that have shackled Pakistani curriculum to Eurocentric curriculum? 4) What possible measures can be taken to rectify the problem?

Nonetheless, it is very vital here to understand that the essay explores colonial impacts on the Pakistani educational system without falling into the pit of the conflict between Orientalism and Occidentalism[9] for it would be detrimental to growth and progress.[10] The best approach is to synthesize the two for a better future. The purpose of this essay is not to corner one approach at the expense of the other. Instead it will try to seek a way to synthesize modernity with tradition and culture in order to design the best curriculum for Pakistan that meets both the contemporary

[4]K. Nagre, "(Mis)educating England: Eurocentric Narratives in Secondary School History Textbooks," *Race Ethnicity and Education*, (2023): 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2023.2192945.

[5]Takayama, K., A. Sriprakash, and R. Connell, R. "Toward a Postcolonial Comparative and International Education." *Comparative Education Review*, 61 (S1), (2017): S1–S24. https://doi.org/10.1086/690455

[6]Post-colonial theories can be applied as a strategic critique to innumerable contemporary academic disciplines. [S. Burney, "Edward Said and Postcolonial Theory: Disjunctured Identities and the Subaltern Voice," in *Pedagogy of the Other: Edward Said, Postcolonial Theory, and Strategies for Critique*. Counterpoints: Studies in the Postmodern Theory of Education, (Vol. 417) (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 41-60; V. Andreotti, *Actionable Postcolonial Theory in Education* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).]

[7]Edward Said is a Palestinian-American social writer, activist and postcolonial intellectualist famous for his work *Orientalism.*

[8]E. W. Said, *Orientalism* (Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1978), 31-328.

[9]Al-Azm called 'Occidentalism' as "Orientalism in Reverse," [S. J. Al-Azm, "Orientalism and Conspiracy," in A. Graf, S. Fathi, and L. Paul, (ed.) *Orientalism and Conspiracy: Politics and Conspiracy Theory in the Islamic World* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010), 5.

[10]S. J. Al-Azm, "Orientalism and Conspiracy," 5.

and global educational needs as well as respects the religion, culture and language of the region.[11] The following section will briefly explain post-colonialism; and would use themes that are necessary for the development of the current study.

2. A Journey from Colonialism to Neocolonialism: Current Educational Scenario

2.1. Post-Colonialism and its Limitations

Post-colonialism is a vast domain that academically studies colonialist and imperialist legacies in later half of 20th century.[12] It critically examines crucial issues in society, economics, politics, and psychological impact on identities due to colonization, thereby, advocating decolonization. Ernest Renan (1823-1892), Edward Said (1935-2003), Frantz Fanon (1925-1961), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (b. 1942) are to name a few post-colonialists. Major themes by these theorists include "orientalism," "subjugation" and "sub-alternation" that highlights the unequal power dynamics, language and discourse, cultural hybridity, movements of resistant and liberation against colonial oppression.[13] Overall, it influenced several disciplines to comprehend colonialist impact after the imperialist rule has ended.

Various critiques of post-colonialism argued that post colonialism focus too much on cultural and national identity emphasizing on identity politics and essentialism;[14] and ignores universal values.[15] While this might be the case for others, but post-colonial approach stands when it comes to the region of Pakistan. As Said rightfully remarked that inequality and animosity between the 'West' and the 'East' is real; and Orientalism is a must read discussion to infer how British Imperialism has affected human thoughts and relations.[16]

Despite limitations of post colonialism, it doesn't lose its charm;[17] (and is still applicable to formerly colonized regions of the sub-continent (Bangladesh, India and Pakistan). However, just like Bryan S. Turner proposed four solutions in *From Orientalism to Global Sociology*, I am of the view that while appreciating the significant impact of colonial rule on Pakistan, we should move forward towards a global order thus ignoring the conflict between orientalism and Occidentalism.[18] The reason to strive for a global order is because it's inevitable as we have

[11]Bryan S. Turner, *Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism* (Routledge, 2002), 96.

[12]V. Andreotti, *Actionable Postcolonial Theory in Education*.

[13]D. Youdell, "Diversity, Inequality, and a Post-structural Politics for Education,*" Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 27 (1), (2006): 33–42. https://doi.org/10.1080/01596300500510252

[14]"Identity politics," refers to political movements who are centralized on the ideologies of a specific group or nation that share common traits: e.g. race, ethnicity, religion, identity etc. [C. Heyes, *Identity Politics*. Fall 2018 ed. [online] *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,* Available at: https://plato.stanford.edu/]. In historiography, "Essentialism," refers to certain attributes and traits of a particular group, nation or culture that makes them easier to understand. Essentialism is a dominant theme while criticizing colonialism. [R. L. Cartwright, "Some Remarks on Essentialism," *The Journal of Philosophy* 65 (20), (1968): 615. https://doi.org/10.2307/2024315]

[15]V. Chibber, *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital* (London: Verso, 2013); Fred Halliday, "'Orientalism' and its Critics," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 20 (2), (1993): 145–163. https://doi.org/10.1080/13530199308705577.

[16]E. W. Said, *Orientalism*, 354.

[17]A. L. Macfie, *Orientalism* (Routledge, 2002), 186-187.

[18]A. L. Macfie, *Orientalism*, 200; Bryan S. Turner, *Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism*.

entered in the Information era; and secondly because 'dewesternization' cannot be completely achievable because it is closely related to 'survival of capitalism.'[19]

2.2. Marginalization of the Colonized People and the Birth of Orientalism

In *Foundations of Critical Race Theory in Education*, Edward Taylor explicates that British's has designed their curriculum and education policy in such a way that spoke eons for their supreme history, literature and philosophy;[20] while romanticizing violence and heinous atrocities it committed in the colonized countries.[21] Moreover, they depict themselves as civilized, rational and modern nations while conceiving other nations as savages, illiterate and inferior.[22] Furthermore, they are incapable to narrate their own histories so it became necessary for Western world to undertake this task.[23] This one-sided dogmatic study of the Eastern world gave birth to Orientalism.[24]. Said claimed further that Orientalism is not concerned with actual facts rather it focused on the western attitude towards the Orients.[25]

This has aided British' to legitimize their colonization on one hand, whereas, enabling them to shatter the historical contribution, cultural identity and self-identity of colonized people.[26] Thus, British have succeeded in complete dominion over orient not only in terms of the land but its people as well.[27]

> Making use of Michel Foucault's 'power/knowledge' theory, Said argues that orientalism, whatever its explicit claims, offers us, not a 'true' picture of the Orient but a representation, are-presentation of it, a reconstruction, in effect a 'colonizing' knowledge, created by the conqueror to comprehend the conquered, and designed to confirm the West's own distinctive identity, and to enhance the West's political and cultural hegemony over Asian peoples.[28]

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[19]I. Silova, J. Rappleye, and Y. You, "Beyond the Western Horizon in Educational Research: Toward a Deeper Dialogue about Our Interdependent Futures," *ECNU Review of Education* 3 (1), (2020): 3–19. https://doi.org/10.1177/2096531120905195.

[20]K. Nagre, "(Mis)educating England: Eurocentric Narratives in Secondary School History Textbooks," *Race Ethnicity and Education*, (2023): 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2023.2192945; E. Taylor, D. Gillborn, and G. Landson-Billings, "Education Policy as an Act of White Supremacy: Whiteness, Critical Race Theory, and Education Reform," in *Foundations of Critical Race Theory in Education* (Routledge, 2016).

[21]S. Burney, "Edward Said and Postcolonial Theory: Disjunctured Identities and the Subaltern Voice," in *Pedagogy of the Other: Edward Said, Postcolonial Theory, and Strategies for Critique*, *Counterpoints: Studies in the Postmodern Theory of Education*, (Vol. 417). (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 41-60.

[22]Edward W. Said, "Arabs, Islam and Dogmas of the West," In: Macfie, A. L. (ed.) *Orientalism: A Reader* (New York University Press, 2000), 104-106.

[23]P. Heehs, "Shades of Orientalism: Paradoxes and Problems in Indian Historiography," *History and Theory*, 42 (2), (2003): 169–195. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2303.00238.

[24]Said, *Orientalism,* 122-123; Orientalism was usually defined as a study of the language, literature and culture of the Orients. However, Edward W. Said added further two definitions to it: ii) a study of the Orients that highlights the ontological and epistemological distinctions; iii) and western approach to reconstruct, manipulate Oriental history in order to gain complete domination over them. [P. Heehs, "Shades of Orientalism: Paradoxes and Problems in Indian Historiography," 169–195], This essay mostly utilizes Said's Orientalism in the third sense.

[25]M. H. Shah, "Edward Said and Bernard Lewis in the Question of Orientalism: A Clash of Paradigms?" in A. Graf, S. Fathi, and L. Paul, (editors), *Orientalism and Conspiracy: Politics and Conspiracy Theory in the Islamic World* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010): 45-67; S. Burney, "Edward Said and Postcolonial Theory: Disjunctured Identities and the Subaltern Voice," 41-60.

[26]K. Nagre, "(Mis)educating England: Eurocentric Narratives in Secondary School History Textbooks," 1–20.

[27]Edward W. Said, "Arabs, Islam and Dogmas of the West," 104-106.

[28]J. J. Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought* (Routledge, 1997), 22.

The British curriculum reinforced their power dynamics by marginalizing the colonized people that remained eminent in generations even in the post-colonial period.[29] Gyatri Spivak, a post colonialist theorist, remarked that 'neocolonialism' is the right term to be used instead of 'post-colonialism' as colonialism is not over.[30] Hence, Pakistanis has lost their cultural and self-identity.[31] They are bound to a sense of inferiority complex that made them unable to respect their own language and cultural heritage.[32] Consequently, western education and English language remains popular and considered the only form of legitimate and exceptional curriculum.[33] This scenario signifies the problem that Pakistani Education System is unable to erase British curriculum despite 76 years of independence.

2.3. Independent Curriculum: An Essential Need

Educational disparities (particularly between the elite and lower-middle class) have created dissatisfaction among Pakistani youth.[34] Hence, an independent curriculum which is self-reliant and individualistic is long overdue.

There's an old saying, 'respect your religion, your culture, your language; and the world will respect you'. Just like a separate homeland, an independent curriculum is essential to develop self-identity and a sense of belonging to shape cultural identity.[35] Frantz Fanon (1925-1961) claimed rightfully in similar regard that "There is a relationship between language, culture and oppression… the colonized subjects was forced to speak the language of the imperial power, compelling him to reject his own language and culture as inferior or not important."[36] Thus, a curriculum should not only meet the contemporary educational demands, but it should also quench the emotional, traditional and religious requirements of one's own country.[37] According to Said, by conforming to decolonial approach one can pave a way to liberate from colonized mind-set.[38] According to A. L. Macfie, if orientalism is as deep as Said perceived then it would not be so easy to uproot it.[39] Although this task is extremely challenging but it is not impossible.

Various scholars and activists have advocated for developing an Islamic and Eastern curriculum devoid of Eurocentric consciousness.[40] Seeking Muslim legacy through history and reviving one's own language, Pakistan can develop its own epistemological narrative.

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[29]Youdell, "Diversity, Inequality, and a Post-structural Politics for Education," 33–42.

[30]Marla Morris, "Postcolonial Curriculum Concepts," *Counterpoints* 499 (2016): 210, Available at: https://www.jstor.org/ [Accessed 23 Feb. 2024].

[31]G. M. Rind, "Postcolonial Critiques on Globalization and Privatization of Education in Pakistan," *Current Issues in Comparative Education,* [online] 25 (1), (2023): 112–120. https://doi.org/10.52214/cice.v25i1.10017.

[32]E. Taylor, D. Gillborn, and G. Landson-Billings, "Education Policy as an Act of White Supremacy: Whiteness, Critical Race Theory, and Education Reform."

[33]G. M. Rind, "Postcolonial Critiques on Globalization and Privatization of Education in Pakistan," 112–120. https://doi.org/10.52214/cice.v25i1.10017.

[34]G. M. Rind, "Postcolonial Critiques on Globalization and Privatization of Education in Pakistan," 112–120.

[35]G. M. Rind, "Postcolonial Critiques on Globalization and Privatization of Education in Pakistan," 112–120.

[36]S. Burney, "Edward Said and Postcolonial Theory: Disjunctured Identities and the Subaltern Voice," 51.

[37]M. W. Apple, "The Politics of Official Knowledge: Does a National Curriculum Make Sense?" *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 14 (1), (1993): 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/0159630930140101.

[38]V. Andreotti, *Actionable Postcolonial Theory in Education,* 11-23.

[39]A. L. Macfie, *Orientalism,* 197.

[40]R. Hashim, "Islamization of the Curriculum," *American Journal of Islam and Society* 16 (2), (1999): 27–43. https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v16i2.2127.

2.4. Why Pakistani Education System is still rooted in British Curriculum?

While the Education system of Pakistan is surrounded by innumerable challenges ranging from an alarmingly low literacy rate, untrained teachers to lack of infrastructure and mending the gap created due to gender disparity.[41] However, the humongous challenge lies in building a solid educational foundation that solely depends on developing an independent curriculum.[42]

The education system of Pakistan relied heavily on the British curriculum because of multitude of factors including: historical factor and deep-rooted inferiority complex, commercial education, lack of alternative curriculum, elitist pressure and class-symbol in education.

Lord Macaulay's *'Minute on Education'* (1835) firmly advocated that the knowledge of the sub-continent and Arabia are somehow inferior and worthless;[43] and in order to completely subjugate their minds, they need to establish a British educational system.[44] A system where they create a class who despite being Indians think and act like British or to put more simply in Jean-Paul Sartre words 'whitewashed.'[45] Hence, English became a dominating language.[46] It was further ingrained in people's mind that any educational system apart from British system is inferior and should be abolished. So, Religious School System (*Madrassa)* was abolished and discouraged.[47] After independence in 1947, Pakistan inherited British educational system as well as this mind-set that only British curriculum has exceptional quality.[48] According to Marla Morris, "Subjugating people becomes psychologically colonized."[49] So, decolonizing this became more difficult due to psychological colonization whose foundation lies in aforementioned inferiority complex.[50] Henceforth, Pakistani education system remains unchanged and still seeks refuge in British Curriculum. Edward Said, in his book *Orientalism*, highlighted similar issues. But he firmly believes that once we recognize the hegemonic dominion of Eurocentric curriculum, we can overcome it.[51]

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[41]A. Raza, and H. S. Murad, "Gender gap in Pakistan: a Socio-demographic Analysis," *International Journal of Social Economics*, 37 (7), (2010): 541–557. https://doi.org/10.1108/03068291011055478.

[42]A. Abbas, D. I. Basit, M. Akhtar, U. Mehmood, D. Quratulain, D. F. Nazim, "Single National Curriculum At School Level in Pakistan: Expected Challenges, Merits And Demerits," *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology*, [online] 19 (3), (2022): 48–65. Available at: https://archives.palarch.nl/index.php/jae/article/view/11167.

[43]M D. Knowles, "Thomas Babington Macaulay, Baron Macaulay: English Politician and Author," [online] *Encyclopedia Britannica*, (2023), Available at: https://www.britannica.com/ [Accessed 26 Feb. 2024].

[44]E. H. Cutts, "The Background of Macaulay's Minute," *The American Historical Review* 58 (4), (1953): 824–853, https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/58.4.824.

[45]S. Burney, "Edward Said and Postcolonial Theory: Disjunctured Identities and the Subaltern Voice," 41-60.

[46]A. Qayyum, A. Saleem, and K. Shezad, "Impact of Colonial Rule on Today's Educational System of Pakistan," *International Journal of Business, Economics and Management Works* 2 (9), (2015): 51–58. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308950145 [Accessed 11 Feb. 2024].

[47]T. Andrabi, J. Das, and A. Khwaja, "A Dime a Day: The Possibilities and Limits of Private Schooling in Pakistan," *Comparative Education Review* 52 (3), (2008): 329–355. https://doi.org/10.1086/588796.

[48]K. Rahman, "Madrassas in Pakistan: Role and Emerging Trends," *Islam and Politics* 120, (2009): 57-70.

[49]Marla Morris, "Postcolonial Curriculum Concepts," *Counterpoints* 499 (2016): 210, Available at: https://www.jstor.org/ [Accessed 23 Feb. 2024].

[50]B. Francis, and M. Mills, "Schools as Damaging Organisations: Instigating a Dialogue Concerning Alternative Models of Schooling," *Pedagogy, Culture and Society* 20 (2), (2012): 251–271. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2012.688765.

[51]Said, *Orientalism.*

Education became privatized and profit-oriented with the passage of time in Pakistan.[52] (More money is equivalent to quality education and guaranteed successful careers. It created a class divide within education system: elites who can afford expansive education are being taught British curriculum, while the poor class who acquire education from government sector deemed worthless.[53] The divide further resulted into the conflict between English medium verses Urdu medium.[54] *Madrassa* education was undermined and reduced to orthodoxy where once seven liberal arts were being taught before colonization.[55] Private institutions further aggravated this rift in order to extort money from parents.

Thanks to private institutions, British curriculum is symbolized with supreme quality education that represents the elites.[56] Although, in the past decade, government has tried numerous times to regulate equal standards of education and alter British curriculum.[57] Unfortunately, their efforts were wasted as now the elite class is 'whitewashed' and reluctant to change the ideology created by British;[58] and reinforced by the private sectors.

Some critiques believed that Pakistani educational system remained unchanged not due to post-colonial factor, but rather because of practical reasons as Pakistan does not have an alternative curriculum to offer.[59] However, this claim is unfounded. Upon several occasions, scholars and thinkers have provided alternative curriculums: for instance, Islamization of education movement;[60] Single National Curriculum (SNP) introduced by Imran Khan.[61] This proves that Pakistan is able to develop an independent curriculum, but lacks will to change their deep-rooted obsession with the British curriculum.

3. Remedies to Undo the Damage

The problem to articulate and refine curriculum is multifaceted. British succeeded in completely eroding our identities as culture and self by distorting our history.[62] The current project of formulating an independent Pakistani curriculum faces resistance from both private institutions

[52]G. M. Rind, "Postcolonial Critiques on Globalization and Privatization of Education in Pakistan," 112-120.

[53]IIPS, "The Rise of Private Education in Pakistan," *Imarat Institute of Policy Studies* – IIPS, (2021b), Available at: https://iips.com.pk/the-rise-of-private-education-in-pakistan/ [Accessed 24 Apr. 2024]; B. Francis, and M. Mills, "Schools as Damaging Organisations: Instigating a Dialogue Concerning Alternative Models of Schooling," 251-271.

[54]F. Abbas, A. Pervaiz, and F. Arshad, "The Competing Status of Urdu and English after Declaration of Urdu as Official Language in Pakistan," *Journal of Research (Urdu)*, 34 (1), (2018): 142-158.

[55]K. Rahman, "Madrassas in Pakistan: Role and Emerging Trends," *Islam and Politics* 120, (2009): 57-70; T. Andrabi, J. Das, and A. Khwaja, "A Dime a Day: The Possibilities and Limits of Private Schooling in Pakistan," *Comparative Education Review* 52 (3), (2008): 329–355. https://doi.org/10.1086/588796.

[56]G. M. Rind, "Postcolonial Critiques on Globalization and Privatization of Education in Pakistan," 112-120.

[57]M. S. Farooq, N. Feroze, and Y. T. Kai, "Public vs Private Quality Education at Primary Level In Pakistan," *International Online Journal of Primary Education* 6 (2), (2017): 1–23. Available at: https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/iojpe/issue/69825/1113751

[58]E. Taylor, D. Gillborn, and G. Landson-Billings, "Education Policy as an Act of White Supremacy: Whiteness, Critical Race Theory, and Education Reform."

[59]B. R. Jamil, "Curriculum Reforms in Pakistan–A Glass Half Full or Half Empty," In *Seminar on School Curriculum Policies and Practices in South Asian Countries, NCERT.* (Delhi: 2009), 10-12.

[60]R. Hashim, "Islamization of the Curriculum," *American Journal of Islam and Society* 16 (2), (1999): 27–43, Regardless of whether the movement was fruitful or not, it makes a point that there is always an alternative curriculum to Euro-centric curriculum.

[61]IIPS, "Single National Curriculum (SNC) in Pakistan,"*Imarat Istitute Policy Studies*, (2021a), Available at: https://iips.com.pk/[Accessed 24 Feb. 2024].

[62]Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1994).

and parents.[63] Their lack of consensus in adopting Pakistani curriculum is the major hurdle.[64] Government has to make a conscious effort to undo pre-existing mind-set regarding Eurocentric curriculum.[65] Since private institutes prefer either Oxford or Cambridge courses, they have instilled an ideology among parents that their children will have better career prospects only by opting British curriculum.[66] Hence, collective campaigns and workshops are required to encourage private institutions and parents to adopt Pakistani curriculum.[67] The chief purpose of these workshops should be to eradicate inferiority complex and to respect one's own language, culture and history.

Government need to abolish personal agendas in order to implement a single national curriculum.[68] On one hand, private sectors are reluctant to follow single curriculum because they are extorting money in the name of quality education;[69] and if there is a single curriculum in both public and private institutes then why would parents pay humongous fee in private sectors.[70] While on the other hand, modernizing *madrassa's* education is equally challenging who perceives modern technological advancement and curriculum as a threat to Islam.[71] They harbor their own agendas of instilling orthodoxy and fundamentalist ideology among their students.[72] In addition, madrassa's teachers are untrained and unqualified to preach the real essence of Qur'ānic studies. Any half-wit *mullah* who has memorized Qur'ānic text by heart (without any sense for its meaning and the message it conveys) offers teaching in *madrassa*. They contribute in spreading religious fundamentalism by corrupting innocent minds.[73] In this scenario, the entire system should be re-created.[74] While the Educational ministry could reach a consensus between public and private

[63]M. U. Malik, and N. Abbass, *Private Schooling Preference over Public Schooling (Research Methodology and Report Writing)*. (2017), Ssrn.com. Available at: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3575605 [Accessed 30 Apr. 2024]; G. M. Rind, "Postcolonial Critiques on Globalization and Privatization of Education in Pakistan," 112-120.

[64]M. U. Malik, and N. Abbass, *Private Schooling Preference over Public Schooling*.

[65]M. W. Apple, "The Politics of Official Knowledge: Does a National Curriculum Make Sense?" *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 14 (1), (1993): 1–16.

[66]R. Amjad, G. MacLeod, "Academic Effectiveness of Private, Public and Private–Public Partnership Schools in Pakistan, *International Journal of Educational Development* 37, (2014): 22–31. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2014.02.005

[67]M. U. Malik, and N. Abbass, *Private Schooling Preference over Public Schooling (Research Methodology and Report Writing)*.

[68]K. Hashmi, "An Analytical Study on Issues, Challenges and Reforms in the Pakistan Studies Curriculum of Secondary Level," *International Journal of Social Sciences* 1 (3), (2011): 210-222.

[69]B. Francis, and M. Mills, "Schools as Damaging Organisations: Instigating a Dialogue Concerning Alternative Models of Schooling," *Pedagogy, Culture and Society* 20 (2), (2012): 251–271. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2012.688765.

[70]Abbas, et.al, "Single National Curriculum At School Level in Pakistan: Expected Challenges, Merits And Demerits," 48-65, The current fee structure of private institutes ranges from 25000-40000 PKR in schools and more for post graduate degrees

[71]T. Andrabi, J. Das, and A. Khwaja, "A Dime a Day: The Possibilities and Limits of Private Schooling in Pakistan," *Comparative Education Review* 52 (3), (2008): 329–355. https://doi.org/10.1086/588796.

[72]D. I. Billquist, and J. M. Colbert, "Pakistan, Madrassas, and Militancy." Doctoral Dissertation: Naval Postgraduate School, 2006, Available at https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/citations/ADA460444. [Accessed 30 April 2024].

[73]T. Andrabi, J. Das, and A. Khwaja, "A Dime a Day: The Possibilities and Limits of Private Schooling in Pakistan," 329–355.

[74]D. I. Billquist, and J. M. Colbert, "Pakistan, Madrassas, and Militancy."

sectors;[75] devising a whole new plan for *madrassa* will receive a lot of backlash and resistance.[76] They need to tread with extreme care and proceed slowly towards changing it.[77]

Furthermore, English language is associated with status symbol; and underprivileged people who lack fluency in English are mocked.[78] To make matters worse, government language policies strengthens English language as it has a great global impact on the market demands.[79] This is countering the policy to promote our national language.[80] In fact the hiring criteria for securing any reputable job demands fluency in English.[81] Meanwhile, the national language of Pakistan 'Urdu' is ignored to the extent that it's become a matter of pride if a child fails to perform in Urdu subjects.[82] Urdu literature is so diverse, yet private institutes have developed a mind-set over time that students perceived the language to be so tough that they refuse to opt subjects in Urdu.[83] Separate actions are required to revive Urdu language and reintroduce as a compulsory subject in the syllabus at least till post-graduate level.[84] Ironically, English language is compulsory till post-graduate but not our mother tongue.[85] This again highlights the point that erasing post-colonial mind-set is extremely challenging.[86]

In addition, decolonizing English language and literature is equally important since it is replacing our national language.[87] Unfortunately, in the past seven decades no or very few contributions have been made in English literature that depicts socio-political and cultural identity of Pakistan.[88] Studies reveal that the entire curriculum of English prose and poetry revolves around Europeans classics.[89] This loud absence is also blamed on the unchanging curriculum of Pakistan by Shahzeb Khan.[90]

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[75]R. Amjad, G. MacLeod, "Academic Effectiveness of Private, Public and Private–Public Partnership Schools in Pakistan, *International Journal of Educational Development* 37, (2014): 22–31. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2014.02.005.

[76]K. Rahman, "Madrassas in Pakistan: Role and Emerging Trends," *Islam and Politics* 120, (2009): 57-70.

[77]D. I. Billquist, and J. M. Colbert, "Pakistan, Madrassas, and Militancy," Doctoral Dissertation: Naval Postgraduate School, 2006, Available at https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/citations/ADA460444. [Accessed 30 April 2024].

[78]S. B. Zaidi, and S. Zaki, "English Language in Pakistan: Expansion and Resulting Implications," *Journal of Education & Social Sciences* 5 (1), (2017): 52-67.

[79]S. B. Zaidi, and S. Zaki, "English Language in Pakistan: Expansion and Resulting Implications," 52-67.

[80]A. Amir, "Tracing Colonial Discourses in Pakistani Educational and Language Policy," In *Language Policy Forum BAAL 2023 Decolonizing Language Policy* (SOAS, University of London, 2023), Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/ [Accessed 24 Feb. 2024].

[81]F. Abbas, A. Pervaiz, and F. Arshad, "The Competing Status of Urdu and English after Declaration of Urdu as Official Language in Pakistan," *Journal of Research (Urdu)*, 34 (1), (2018): 142-158.

[82]S. B. Zaidi, and S. Zaki, "English Language in Pakistan: Expansion and Resulting Implications," 52-67.

[83]A decade ago Pakistan Studies and Islamic studies were being taught in Urdu language. But as the A-O level courses became fashionable, they urged students to opt those courses in English. T. Rahman, "The Urdu —English Controversy in Pakistan," *Modern Asian Studies* 31 (1), (1997): 177–207. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0026749x00016978.

[84]Rahman, "The Urdu —English Controversy in Pakistan," 177–207.

[85]Rahman, "The Urdu —English Controversy in Pakistan," 177–207.

[86]S. B. Zaidi, and S. Zaki, "English Language in Pakistan: Expansion and Resulting Implications," 52-67.

[87]Rahman, "The Urdu —English Controversy in Pakistan," 177–207; S. B. Zaidi, and S. Zaki, "English Language in Pakistan: Expansion and Resulting Implications," *Journal of Education & Social Sciences* 5 (1), (2017): 52-67.

[88]S. Khan, and A. Raza, "(De)Coloniality in Research: A Case Study of English Literary Humanities in Pakistan," *Journal of Research in Humanities*, 56 (1), (2020): 17–35.

[89]K. Nagre, "(Mis)educating England: Eurocentric Narratives in Secondary School History Textbooks," *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 1–20.

[90]S. Khan, and A. Raza, "(De)Coloniality in Research: A Case Study of English Literary Humanities in Pakistan," 22-23.

The foremost task for Pakistani ministry of education should be to articulate a curriculum that not only magnifies Islamic culture, history and tradition of Pakistan;[91] but should also promotes creativity and develops practical and problem solving skills. In order to build a nation, reforms in the educational system are extremely important.[92] In this regard, government should employ scholars, writers and activists to remodel their curriculum, i.e., Pakistani in essence but also aligns with global standards as well.[93] It's indeed a time consuming task but not impossible as Pakistani literature is rich and diverse. They just have to extract and formulate a curriculum from existing literature.

Once Pakistani curriculum is finalized, government should implement this single curriculum for both public and private sectors; and take strict actions against those who refuse to comply. Many critics counter SNC project on the grounds that mere introduction to new curriculum will not suffice as both private sectors and *madrassa* are reluctant to abide it due to their own personal agendas.[94] Therefore, proper surveillance and monitoring is required to ensure that policies are actually being implemented and practiced.[95]

In the past 10 years, there have been debates of articulating Pakistani curriculum various times. However, due to political and socio-economic turbulence no government is able to execute the reforms.[96] So, government should devise a preventive measure and proper legislation is required that entails that each elected government should push forward the project just like they are obliged to fulfill other international commitments.[97]

Based on the aforementioned remedial strategies, one tentative (suggestive) curriculum model could be: introducing Muslim philosophy, Islamic history, Urdu literature and ethics along with mathematics and science subjects. Whereas, English language ought to be made optional during post-graduation along with Persian, French and Arabic as made by far East countries.

In English Studies, departments should support Pakistani content as proposed by Shahzeb Khan, "The need for inclusion of Pakistani English-language literature is paramount because it will allow Pakistani students of literature to come to terms with their own ontological and socio-political issues."[98]

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[91]R. Hashim, "Islamization of the Curriculum," *American Journal of Islam and Society* 16 (2), (1999): 27–43.

[92]K. Hashmi, "An Analytical Study on Issues, Challenges and Reforms in the Pakistan Studies Curriculum of Secondary Level," 210-222.

[93]S. B. Zaidi, and S. Zaki, "English Language in Pakistan: Expansion and Resulting Implications," 52-67.

[94]K. Hashmi, "An Analytical Study on Issues, Challenges and Reforms in the Pakistan Studies Curriculum of Secondary Level," 210-222; Abbas, et.al, "Single National Curriculum at School Level in Pakistan: Expected Challenges, Merits And Demerits," 48–65.

[95]H. Ahsan, *Analyzing the Pros and Cons of Single National Curriculum* (PIED, 2021) Available at: https://pide.org.pk/ [Accessed 24 Feb. 2024].

[96]K. Hashmi, "An Analytical Study on Issues, Challenges and Reforms in the Pakistan Studies Curriculum of Secondary Level," 210-222; A. Qayyum, A. Saleem, and K. Shezad, "Impact of Colonial Rule on Today's Educational System of Pakistan," 57, Imran Khan, the former Prime Minister of Pakistan, tried to implement a single curriculum country-wide. But lacks support from parents and private institutions. After his government, the syllabus reverted to British curriculum because neither people wants to change colonial mind-set nor the new government wants to acknowledge good works of the former elected parties. So these reforms are left in the middle.

[97]K. Hashmi, "An Analytical Study on Issues, Challenges and Reforms in the Pakistan Studies Curriculum of Secondary Level," 210-222.

[98]S. Khan, and A. Raza, "(De)Coloniality in Research: A Case Study of English Literary Humanities in Pakistan," 31.

For instance, neither the literary contributions of Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) nor his poetry has been taught in institutes. We may add his works like *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* in the newly designed discourse. Likewise, students are pressurized to learn lengthy *Surahs* (chapters) from the Qur'ān due to which they are unable to absorb the real essence of the holy book. Instead, the subject of Islamic ethics should be devised where students can develop the real understanding and meaning of life, relationships and the life here after.[99]

In addition, educational ministry should make policies that supersede Urdu language over English language.[100] Apart from foundational knowledge, the curriculum ought to add subjects that increase sensitivity of global issues and promotes creativity, digital literacy and religious tolerance as well. Of course, things might not change over-night and rigid mind-sets cannot be altered on a whim. Yet every step towards decolonizing the curriculum surmounts to success.

4. Future Prospects and Further Research

Since 2010, Pakistani youth is endeavoring for a better future and creating possibilities that were unfathomable before. Overall, literacy rate, reforms in gender inequalities, and career-opportunities has been improved and increased.[101] The current generation is open to change and the future seems bright for Pakistan. Gradual measures to decolonize curriculum is possible indeed.

Although, I've discussed a tentative model for an independent curriculum, but more research is needed in devising a model that is approved by majority of educational sectors (both public and private). Revising discourse of *madrassa*, giving them trained teachers; and introducing comparative religious studies that promotes toleration and eradicate fundamentalism needs extensive research and hence, beyond the scope of this paper. Moreover, several *madrassa's* (especially in remote areas of Pakistan) are connected to fundamentalist religious groups or fanatics. Pakistan needs to nationalize and recognize legitimate *madrassas* by Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, while banning all others. This is a huge project that would require a special department in HEC to devise separate study and planning to instigate necessary measures. Researchers may seek guide from Vanessa Andreotti's work *Actionable Postcolonial Theory in Education* (2011) for developing a suitable pedagogy for Pakistan.

5. Conclusion

It is interesting to see that most of the criticism comes from the Western world who obviously wants to diminish and justify their wrongdoings during the colonial era.[102] In spite of criticism that post-colonial theories has garnered over the years[103] it still stands firm and true for formerly colonized regions particularly Pakistan. However, the essay does not justify Occidentalist approach either and instead calls for a synthesis to reach a productive and positive outcome.[104] A

[99]This is a tentative model for suggestion here. More research is needed to articulate a comprehensive Pakistani curriculum.

[100]F. Abbas, A. Pervaiz, and F. Arshad, "The Competing Status of Urdu and English after Declaration of Urdu as Official. Language in Pakistan," *Journal of Research (Urdu)*, 34 (1), (2018): 142-158.

[101]N. Siddiqui, and S. Gorard, "Comparing Government and Private Schools in Pakistan: The Way Forward for Universal Education," *International Journal of Educational Research* 82 (2017): 159–169, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2017.01.007

[102]Bryan S. Turner, *Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism* (Routledge, 2002).

[103]Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism.*

[104]A. L. Macfie, *Orientalism.*

much needed synthesis that not only transcends the problems of existing polarizations between east and west; but also beneficial for Pakistan on a global level as well.[105] Macfie claimed in similar vein:

> In the context of the debate about orientalism, therefore, the standard polarization of Orient–Occident, East–West, Christian–Muslim, white–black and capitalist–socialist, simply does not apply. Does this mean that, in academic circles at least, the forces of globalism, or perhaps better still individualism, have overcome orientalism? It would seem that it does.[106]

This essay utilizes theories of post-colonial intellectuals to critique the current Pakistani educational curriculum that is still shackled to British curriculum.[107] In addition, it has successfully applied the theory to develop a counter discourse that re-establish Pakistanis cultural and self-identities.[108] Various ways are explored to liberate nation from the psychological colonization based on British ideology. This essay highlights the significance of embracing one's own religion, language and culture for self-actualization and cultural identity.[109] By decolonizing curriculum, Pakistan can create a whole new horizon of self-reliance for its upcoming generations. It would also promotes free-thinking by eliminate the feelings of 'otherness' infested by the Western studies of the Orients.[110]

In each section, the essay deeply explored the factors and reasons that have rendered Pakistani Education System unable to eradicate Eurocentric (particularly British) curriculum from past seven decades. Furthermore, it endeavors to explicate concisely the need for an independent educational system. After unveiling the colonial impact on the education system of Pakistan, the essay also proposed a tentative model along with possible measures that can help to decolonize it. In addition, I have highlighted areas where future research, work and planning is required. The essay comprehensively structured ways that can enable Pakistan to abolish and terminate the roots of the British curriculum from Pakistani curriculum. However, in order to harness fruitful and progressive results, the ministry of education in Pakistan needs to tread carefully while imposing firm yet gradual changes rather than implementing a single national curriculum (SNC) hastily.[111] Only through collective effort and conscious political will, Pakistan can develop a curriculum in accordance to its cultural heritage and linguistic diversity;[112] and meets contemporary needs of education in particular.

[105]F. R. Dallmayr, *Beyond Orientalism: Essays on Cross-Cultural Encounter* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).

[106]A. L. Macfie, *Orientalism*, 229.

[107]K. Takayama, A. Sriprakash, and R. Connell, "Toward a Postcolonial Comparative and International Education." *Comparative Education Review*, 61 (S1), (2017): S1–S24. https://doi.org/10.1086/690455

[108]S. Burney, "Edward Said and Postcolonial Theory: Disjunctured Identities and the Subaltern Voice," 41-60.

[109]Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1994).

[110]Edward W. Said, "Arabs, Islam and Dogmas of the West," In: Macfie, A. L. (ed.) *Orientalism: A Reader*, 104-106.

[111]H. Ahsan, *Analyzing the Pros and Cons of Single National Curriculum* (PIED, 2021); D. I. Billquist, and J. M. Colbert, "Pakistan, Madrassas, and Militancy."].

[112]K. Hashmi, "An Analytical Study on Issues, Challenges and Reforms in the Pakistan Studies Curriculum of Secondary Level," 210-222; F. Abbas, A. Pervaiz, and F. Arshad, "The Competing Status of Urdu and English after Declaration of Urdu as Official Language in Pakistan."

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